

FOR THRILLS BIG AUDIENCE AT AUGUSTANA

John McCormack, probably the greatest lyric tenor in the world, sang last evening at the Augustana college gymnasium, before an audience which taxed the capacity of the large auditorium. He was at his best and he fully justified the favorable reputation that preceded him. No other artist has so packed the gymnasium since Amelita Galli-Curci sang there four years ago.

Long before the hour for the singers' appearance, practically all of the gallery and running track were filled and the majority of the main floor. And the crowd included not only tri-city lovers of good music, but many people who had come from surrounding towns to hear probably the most loved singer of the day. Before the evening was over they were not content to express their appreciation by mere hand clapping, but after several numbers whistles were included. McCormack certainly has something to give the public which is a rare gift. His voice is full of rare and superb beauty. And he is absolute master of it.

Italian Number First. Opening his program with the aria, "Il Mio Tesoro" from Don Giovanni, by Mozart, the tenor at once sustained his reputation with the audience. His tones were perfect, and this number displayed to advantage his ability to sing something other than the ballads for which he is probably more widely famed. This, his only number in Italian, showed his excellent command of tone and when he was called on for an encore he generously responded singing "Oh, Sleep," which proved just how quickly he could turn from the lighter, deeper numbers to the simpler ones—true versatility. The artist was most generous in responding with encores, which the audience appreciated to say the least. Donald McBeath, violinist, about

when the Chicago critic spoke so favorably after his Sunday afternoon concert at the auditorium, played first "Fantasia" by Mozart and "Rhapsody" by Mendelssohn, and responded to an encore. His second group was Viennese Ballade at Polonaise, the same as given in Chicago Sunday. He plays with a remarkable understanding and is rapidly gaining a reputation.

McCormack began his second group with a French selection, "La Frocassie," by Cesar Franck, into which he put his full emotional power and which proved that he has the power of really feeling the emotion which the composer meant to portray in his work, and of portraying it to others. His highest tones were true, as well as those in the lower register, probably displayed in this number more than in any other on the program.

Shops Irish Songs. His second number in his second group was in English, "Oh, Like a Queen's Her Happy Tread," by Graham Peal, and in this one his wonderful enunciation could be appreciated. The third number was "Love's Secret," into which the artist put his ability to sing and at the same time express sadness. This and the last number of the group, Arthur Whiting's, "A Birthday," were odd selections, which the singer sang in his own way. But the audience was not content to have McCormack finish this group without an encore, and kept on clapping without even a pause as the singer came on the stage three times and bowed. He then gratified their wishes and sang, "as many as John McCormack can," as many in the audience expressed it, and all were thinking—"Little Mother of Mine." After more bows followed an encore, singing Schubert's with an encore, singing Schubert's

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"Ave Maria." It is almost impossible to explain how the audience appreciated this number, their applause just partially expressing it, but by their faces showed plainer than any number of words just how much they enjoyed the rendition.

The Irish folk songs were given after the intermission. There is positively no one who can sing these ballads as John McCormack. Probably it is these and the American ballads which have gained him the world wide popularity which he has had for years and which he is keeping year after year unlike most such gifted folk. "Down by the Sally Gardens," arranged by Hughes was the first number, and the second, arranged by the same man, "The Light of the Moon," displayed to perfection the twist he can give to the words in singing in the Irish brogue. "Finnish Grove" and "Pastures Plover," the latter by Milligan-Fox, were followed by the always welcomed "Mother Macchree," the audience, all recognizing the song which was to be sung for them, applauded as much as they, and did the following number, when

the accompanist struck the first note on the piano.

Last Group Popular. Following the second number by Mr. McBeath, McCormack came back on the platform to give his last and probably most popular group, the one which many in the audience had been waiting the entire evening to hear. "Dear Old Pal of Mine" was the first, and the most unfamiliar number in the group, "She Rested by the Broken Brook," by Coleridge-Taylor was the second. Then came "Roses of Picardy," the audience scarcely waiting until the last note had died away before they began their applause. "Only You," by Edwin Schneider, the able accompanist, should have closed the program, but so well was this number given that an encore was demanded, although Mr. McCormack tried to make three bows satisfy the admirers, and the presentation of the composer-pianist. He responded, giving another favorite, "I Hear You Calling Me." Too much cannot be said for Edwin Schneider, McCormack's accompanist. Although he did not

play a group on the program as is usually the custom, his artistry was felt throughout the entire program. One was not aware of the fact that he was accompanying the soloists, which is a real art. One had to stop enjoying the song itself and listen only to the music to fully appreciate his artistry. That, of course, is the real art of accompanying.

The Tri-City Musical association

is to be congratulated for bringing the Irish tenor to Rock Island, and giving local people the opportunity to hear this artist.

Tri-city audiences are to have the opportunity to hear other artists in the next two months, which they are fortunate in being able to get to the city. Sascha Jacobson, violinist, comes Feb. 6, and Josef Hofmann on Feb. 29. Margery Maxwell, with the Moine Ladies' Chorus, on Feb. 29, and the Myrna

Shaw company on March 21. May 19 the Metropolitan quartet, composed of Alda, DeLuca, Lazzari and Hackett, come to the community. The next concerts by the Tri-

City Symphony orchestra will be given at the Coliseum, in Davenport, Sunday afternoon, Feb. 15, and at the Augustana gymnasium on Feb. 16.

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